

Claim 29. (New)

A data processing machine for online determination of the price of shipment of freight, comprising

a central controller including a CPU and a memory operatively connected to such
5 CPU;

at least one terminal, adapted for communicating with such central controller, for
transmitting to the central controller shipment pricing information including but
not limited to some or all of loading port, discharge port, transit time schedule,
service category, commodity type and equipment requirements;

10 the memory in such central controller containing a program, adapted to be
executed by said CPU, for calculating a freight rate of shipping cargo within a
future period, for a particular freight rate, into which a shipper inputs at least one
of loading port, discharge port, transit time schedule, service category type,
commodity type, and equipment requirements;

15 wherein said central controller receives such information from said terminal and
calculates the freight rate based upon the information provided.

Claim 30. (New)

The machine according to claim 29, wherein said program in said memory is adapted to
20 receive a customer request input via said terminal to purchase the shipment and further
adapted to perform a credit check on a customer using said machine.

Claim 31. (New)

The machine according to claim 30, wherein said program in said memory is adapted to receive a customer request input via said terminal to purchase the shipment and further adapted to generate a booking form to book the shipment in accordance with a shipping
5 carrier's bills of lading, terms and conditions.

Claim 32. (New)

A method of determining the price of shipping freight and booking same using a central controller including a CPU and a memory operatively connected to said CPU and
10 containing a program adapted to be executed by said CPU for determining the price of shipping freight, and a terminal adapted for communicating with said CPU, the method comprising the steps to:

- enter loading port parameters to the controller via the terminal;
- enter discharge port parameters to the controller via the terminal;
- 15 • enter transit time and routing parameters to the controller via the terminal;
- enter service category parameters to the controller via the terminal;
- enter commodity type parameters to the controller via the terminal;
- enter shipment equipment type parameters to the controller via the terminal;

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And calculating the freight rate of a shipment that gives the customer a right to ship within a defined shipping period for a particular freight rate a shipment of cargo

satisfying the load port, discharge port, transit time, service category, commodity and equipment requirements by having the CPU execute said program; and outputting the freight rate to the terminal.

5 Claim 33. (New)

A data processing machine for determining a freight rate to engage shipping space, comprising a CPU and a memory operatively connected to said CPU, said memory containing a program adapted to be executed by said CPU and said CPU and memory cooperatively adapted to receive shipping pricing information, and to calculate a price to
10 engage such shipment within a future period, for a particular freight rate, satisfying the cargo transport information submitted.

Claim 34. (New)

The machine according to claim 33, wherein said program is adapted to receive freight
15 pricing information comprising the load port, discharge port, transit time, service category, commodity parameters and equipment requirements.

Claim 35. (New)

The machine according to claim 33, wherein said program in said memory is adapted to
20 receive data comprising at least one of information describing a desired load port, information describing a desired discharge port, information describing desired transit time and routing, information describing a shipment service category, information describing goods to be shipped, and information describing desired equipment;

wherein said platform is adapted to use said information to calculate the freight rate.

Claim 36. (New)

The machine according to claim 35, wherein said program in said memory program is
5 adapted to calculate the freight rate based in part upon all of said information.

Claim 37. (New)

A method of determining the price of a freight shipment using a computer, comprising
the steps of:

10 receiving cargo transport parameters relative to the future booking of a shipment;
calculating the price for a shipment within a defined shipping period for a
particular price, in which the shipment satisfies the cargo transport parameters;
and outputting the freight rate.

15 Claim 38. (New)

The method according to claim 37, wherein the step of receiving the cargo transport
parameters includes receiving load port, discharge port, transit time, equipment type,
commodity type and service criteria.

20 Claim 39. (New)

The method according to claim 37, further comprising the steps of receiving an indication
that a customer has purchased the booking and updating a database to reflect the sale of
the booking.

Claim 40. (New)

The method according to claim 37, further comprising the step of receiving freight shipment sales information from database indicating a number of similar freight
5 shipments that have been previously sold, and wherein the calculating step uses the sales information in determining the shipment price.

Claim 41. (New)

The method according to claim 37, further comprising the steps of receiving a customer
10 request to purchase the freight shipment, receiving tender of the purchase price from the customer, performing a transaction to sell the freight shipment to the customer, and storing information regarding said shipment.

Claim 42. (New)

15 The method according to claim 41, further comprising the steps of receiving a customer request to purchase the freight shipment, performing a transaction to engage ship space for the customer in accordance with the terms of the cargo transport parameters, and modifying the database to reflect the sale of the shipping space pursuant to the engagement.

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Claim 43. (New)

The method according to claim 38, wherein the calculation of the shipment price is based in part upon option pricing information that is satisfied by more than one criteria of the intended shipment.

5 Claim 44. (New)

The method according to claim 37, wherein the calculating step includes calculating the shipment price based at least in part on the formula: Freight Rate = **O**. times **F**. times **C**. times **V**. times **E**. times **S**.

Where **O** is a ocean freight rate for the shipment, **F** is the standard option factor, **C** is a
10 factor related to the type of goods to be shipped, **V** is the factor related to volatility, **E** is a factor related to the equipment type and **S** is factor related to service category.

Claim 45. (New)

Computer executable process steps operative to control a computer, stored on a computer
15 readable medium, for determining a price to engage a shipment space, comprising:

- a step to receive load port terminal criteria;
- a step to receive discharge port terminal criteria;
- a step to receive transit time and routing criteria;
- a step to receive service category criteria;
- 20 • a step to receive commodity type criteria;
- a step to receive shipment equipment criteria
- a step to output the shipping price.

- a step to calculate the price for the shipping space, within a shipping period, for a particular price, in which the shipping space satisfies the load port terminal criteria, the discharge port terminal criteria, transit time and routing criteria, service category criteria, commodity type criteria and the transit and loading equipment criteria.

Claim 46. (New)

A method of pricing shipping space, comprising the steps of:

- Inquiring on a freight rate for a shipping space;
- Receiving said shipping price;
- Receiving an offer to purchase for a given price an option to engage within a shipping period, for a particular freight rate, the shipping space booking; and
- Purchasing said option at said option price.

Claim 47. (New)

The method according to claim 46, further including the step of engaging the shipping space or an equivalent.

Claim 48. (New)

The method according to claim 46, wherein said step of inquiring on a shipping price includes providing shipment information including load port terminal, discharge port terminal, transit time and routing, service category, commodity type and shipping equipment criteria.

Claim 49. (New)

The method according to Claim 46 in which the steps of inquiring of the freight rate and receiving the price are iteratively performed in one or more cycles of negotiation.